

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 06304 301430 Z

61

ACTION CPR-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 OPR-02 SCI-06 NASA-04 SS-15

NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 IO-13 PRS-01

SY-10 PA-03 RSR-01 /089 W
----- 076771

R 301335 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHCYUSECSTATE WASHDC 4637
INFO USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 6304

STATE FOR S/ CPR- AMBASSADOR SMOAK; USIA PASS NASA

E. O. 11652: ADS, DECLASSIFY AFTER VISIT

TAGS: OVIP IN

SUBJ: CHALLENGER VISIT

REF: STATE 97176, 99826, 99828, 102170, 102021, 102867

1. GENERAL: MID- JUNE IS HOTTEST PERIOD OF YEAR IN DELHI AND MANY KEY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE FREQUENTLY OUT OF TOWN. (WE ALREADY KNOW THAT THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER WILL BOTH BE ABROAD AT THE TIME OF THE CHALLENGER VISIT.) THE UNIVERSITIES ARE CLOSED. IN ADDITION, AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND SOCIETY, SPONSORED BY THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, WILL DRAW AT LEAST A PORTION OF THE TOP SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY AWAY TO THE SOUTH INDIAN CITY OF BANGALORE. THESE CONSIDERATIONS SUGGEST A RELATIVELY LIGHT PROGRAM FOR THE ASTRONAUTS AND THEIR WIVES -- ONE WHICH WOULD ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES BUT MAY NOT INCLUDE A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE.

2. SCHEDULE: BECAUSE OF THE LATE ARRIVAL AND THE LACK OF A GOOD AIR- CONDITIONED SITE AT THE AIRPORT, WE DO NOT PROPOSE AN ARRIVAL PRESS CONFERENCE, INSTEAD, I HOPE THE ASTRONAUTS WILL JOIN ME FOR A STAG DINNER THE NIGHT OF THEIR ARRIVAL, TO WHICH I WILL INVITE ABOUT

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 06304 301430 Z

30 SENIOR INDIAN OFFICIALS AND SCIENTISTS. DINNER FOR THE ASTRONAUTS WIVES WILL BE ARRANGED SEPARATELY. THE NEXT DAY, WHICH WILL BE THE ONLY FULL WORKING DAY, WE WILL SCHEDULE A MORNING WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AT RAJGHAT (GANDHI' S MEMORIAL); A CALL ON THE PRESIDENT, THE VICE- PRESIDENT, OR THE MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DEPENDING ON WHO IS AVAILABLE; A PRESS CONFERENCE; AND ONE OTHER MEETING OR SYMPOSIUM ARRANGED EITHER BY US OR BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT.

3. WIVES SCHEDULE: WE NEED TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WHETHER MRS. CERNAN AND MRS. EVANS WOULD BE INTERESTED IN A TRIP TO AGRA JUNE 20 TO SEE THE TAJ MAHAL. THERE IS A FLIGHT LEAVING AT 0650 ON JUNE 20 AND ARRIVING AGRA 0725, WHICH WOULD PERMIT THEM TO SEE THE TAJ AND POSSIBLY ALSO THE AGRA FORT BEFORE THE HEAT BUILDS UP. SINCE THERE IS NO FLIGHT BACK UNTIL 1625, WE WOULD RECOMMEND RETURN BY AIR- CONDITIONED CAR (A 3- HOUR DRIVE) EITHER JUST BEFORE OR JUST AFTER LUNCH. THIS WOULD STILL LEAVE TIME FOR SHOPPING IN THE EVENING. ALTERNATIVELY, MRS. CERNAN AND MRS. EVANS COULD SIGHTSEE AND SHOP IN NEW DELHI IN THE MORNING AND EVENING, RESTING DURING THE INTENSE MID- DAY HEAT.

MEDIA COVERAGE: WE ASSUME FROM PARA 3 OF STATE 102021 THAT THE POST IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL MEDIA COVERAGE, AND WE ARE PLANNING SUCH COVERAGE SUPERVISED BY AN AMERICAN OFFICER. THE MAY 20 PRESS CONFERENCE WOULD BE HELD AT THE ASHOKA HOTEL, WHICH HAS GOOD CONFERENCE ROOM SPACE AVAILABLE. USIS WOULD MAKE ALL ARRANGEMENTS AND MANAGE THE CONFERENCE, WHICH WE WOULD ANTICIPATE WILL BE COVERED BY ALL INDIA RADIO/ TV AS WELL AS NEWSPAPERS. WILL CHALLENGER BE BRINGING OR SENDING IN ADVANCE NASA OR USIA PRESS KITS? WE WOULD NEED 75 BUT CAN PREPARE THEM OURSELVES IF NECESSARY. WOULD ONE OR MORE MEMBERS OF CHALLENGER BE AVAILABLE FOR PERSONAL INTERVIEW BY ALL INDIA RADIO/ TV IF REQUESTED? WOULD MRS. CERNAN AND MRS. EVANS BE AVAILABLE (ASSUMING TIME PERMITS) TO MEET WOMEN WRITERS FROM INDIAN MEDIA?

5. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS: WE WILL MAKE ADMINSTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS REQUESTED STATE 97176 AND ANTICIPATE NO EXPENSES OTHER THAN THOSE FOR HOTEL ROOMSAND BOARD. IF WIVES ELECT TO VISIT AGRA, AIRLINE TICKETS WILL COST \$10 EACH. IT IS CONCEIVABLE INDIAN GOVERNMENT MIGHT OFFER TO MAKE PLANE AVAILABLE FOR AGRA VISIT

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 06304 301430 Z

BUT WE DO NOT COUNT ON THIS. WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GET THE HOTEL ROOM ASSIGNMENTS SOONER THAN 24 HOURS BEFORE ARRIVAL. THE EMBASSY MEDICAL OFFICER, DR. EDWARD ETZEL, WILL BE AVAILABLE DURING THE VISIT.

6. DRESS REQUIREMENTS: LIGHTWEIGHT CLOTHING IS ESSENTIAL AND, AS

IS EVIDENT FROM SCHEDULE, NOTHING MORE FORMAL THAN SUIT IS
REQUIRED FOR THE MEN. THE WOMEN WILL NOT NEED ANYTHING MORE
THAN DAYTIME DRESSES AND SPORTSWEAR.

7. SECURITY: WE BELIEVE THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT WILL PROVIDE
WHATEVER PERSONAL SECURITY IS NECESSARY UPON ARRIVAL AND
DEPARTURE,
AT THE HOTEL, AND DURING THE OFFICIAL CALLS. WE WILL WORK CLOSELY
WITH THEM ON THIS. GIVEN THE LOCATION OF THE HOTEL NEAR THE EMBASSY
AND ONLY ABOUT 15 MINUTES FROM THE AIRPORT, PLUS THE MINIMAL AMOUNT
OF

MOVEMENT OUTSIDE THE HOTEL/ AMBASSADOR' S RESIDENCE, WE DO NOT
FORESEE
ANY MAJOR PROBLEMS. SUBJECT TO YOUR APPROVAL, WE RECOMMEND
RELEASE
OF A GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE DELHI SCHEDULE IN ADVANCE.

8. EMBASSY CONTROL OFFICER IS POLITICAL COUNSELOR, PAUL KREISBERG,
TELEPHONE 70351 EXT 219.
MOYNIHAN

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